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LOS ANGELES COUNTY

ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY COMMISSION

ROOM 163, HALL OF ADMINISTRATION / 500 WEST TEMPLE / LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012 / 974-1491

July 23, 1986

Honorable Board of Supervisors
Los Angeles County
383 Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Joe Crail, Chairperson
Robert J. Lowe, Vice Chairperson

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Dear Supervisors

SUBJECT: HEARING PROCEDURES OF REGIONAL PLANNING

On November 26, 1985, the Board of Supervisors modified the case processing procedures of the Regional Planning Commission to permit certain cases to be heard by a hearing officer employed by the Department rather than by the commission. The Board asked the department and the Economy and Efficiency Commission to report on the effectiveness of the new procedures within six months of the effective date. The new system became fully operational in March, 1986.

The objectives of the change were to correct perceived problems in case processing which had been highlighted in several studies of the department. The objectives were:

- to reduce the backlog of zoning and subdivision cases and speed the process of deciding cases;
- to increase the commission and support resources devoted to the resolution of countywide planning issues.

We have reviewed the new system in terms of the Board's objectives. We believe the hearing officer system is a sound improvement over the prior method of hearing cases.

- The hearing officer process costs slightly less per hearing-day (\$430) than the prior combination of Zoning Board and Commission (\$637 to \$1232).
- The hearing officers are deciding cases more rapidly than the prior combination of Zoning Board and Commission. Hearing Officers decide 3.7 cases per hearing day; the Zoning Board averaged 2.5.

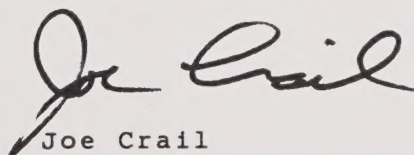
- The Regional Planning Commission retains full authority to decide how cases will be heard. Upon advance review of the hearing agenda, the commission can re-assign any case to itself from a hearing officer. Subsequent to a decision, any appeal of a hearing officer's decision is made to the commission. Moreover, the commission may recall any hearing officer's decision for a re-hearing.
- More time is available for consideration of policy and planning issues. However, the commission could further increase the rate at which it is considering and deciding policy matters, and has been working intensively with the Director to accomplish that end.

The Director of Regional Planning and the Commission have themselves been reviewing the new procedures. They have identified and are considering certain refinements to it, particularly in the area of case scheduling. In addition, within the next year the Commission and the Director expect to be proposing additional improvements to case processing.

THEREFORE we recommend that the Board of Supervisors:

1. continue the case processing procedures established in November, 1985 with such refinements as are recommended from time to time by the Regional Planning Commission and the Director of Regional Planning.
2. direct the Director of Regional Planning to work with the Commission to increase the scope and rate of deliberations on countywide planning and policy issues.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Joe Crail", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Joe Crail
Chairman



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